**BUSINESS SPEECH**

**FOR**

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Hello everyone!!! I want to thank you for this opportunity to connect with all of you and to take a moment to share my professional path that led to where I am today. None of us operates in a bubble ... although I think there are times we wish we would.... (**Wait for the laugh**) and no one... that I can think of.... is singularly and solely responsible for the achievements and success they’ve garnered throughout their professional career, so it’s really crucial to share lessons and experience.... and while we hear stories of the “legends” of business... the “Titans of Tech,” the first string players on the teams of companies we all look up to, it’s even **more** important to share our own stories with our contemporaries and colleagues. While myths motivate us, it’s vital that we break down the essence of “work technology” to relatable discourse that exists in environments in which we have found ourselves personally.

For me, the “long story short” is that I started working at Quotient when I was in college. Back then, in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, the company was just a start up and I was able to balance my schedule to work and go to school at the same time. I attained my BA in History and Political Science at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ University and also completed my Masters in Library and Information Science while attending \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I was given an opportunity to establish a team in the Print and Mail department at Quotient and from there I took on different tasks and roles. Briefly, some of the key things I learned early on are:

* Always add value and always take on new tasks and challenges
* Adapt and be flexible because management styles change and company goals change too.
* It doesn’t matter if you are with an established organization or employed at a start up company that shifts to being a public company, learn from others and connect internally.

That’s the very brief takeaway... but I’m not here to be **THAT** brief... (**Say that with animation and wait for the laugh**)..... the simple truth ... the proven technology to achieve personal success in a business environment is really **simple** but endlessly fascinating and, like business environments, perpetually changing, morphing, revising, adapting.... **Pay attention**. Give **more** than you get. Be **enthusiastic**. Respect the culture and climate of the workplace. Exercise **common sense**. Take **ownership** of your contribution to the greater good and success of the business. Be responsible for the work you do and the result it produces.

Sounds pretty easy, right ??? Now all we have to do is to discuss **HOW** to achieve those seemingly simple objectives. For the most part, people.... valued professionals spend a lifetime of experience, trial, error, and rebounding in finding the path to effectiveness.... I’ve been generously given a few minutes to share my point of view, so let’s “break it down....”

I want to first mention, by way of comparison and observation, that we are in a business that supports commerce. Why do I mention this? Because it’s the perfect illustration to show that times change... sometimes more rapidly than either the consumer or the professional sector is willing to acknowledge... tastes change... business patterns shift... and the degree to which we can express our agility and improve our response time as we address that change will determine just how conditioned and prepared we are to do our jobs and to lead in business.

Just as a simple example, look how the retail landscape has changed. In early 2018, Women’s Wear Daily featured an article that declared that in that year, almost **THREE THOUSAND** retail establishments would close. While, as someone once said, “You’re all gonna need clothes... and other things” still holds truth, the way we all spend money... the way in which we shop, and perceived importance and value has changed drastically. Every ripple in the retail environment has an effect on all of us. (**Perhaps cite a statistic that you’ve experienced in your business**). We can see, through our analytics, that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I mention this because we are all affected by change.... whether we drive it or are personally impacted by it.

Some wise person once coined the phrase, “Adapt or die.” In a nutshell, especially in our rapidly changing environments, that is the key to any form of success. In order to do that, we have to be prepared, knowledgeable, versatile, observant, skilled, and open to new ideas. **GREAT**!!! How do we do that? I think we have to be vigilant and keenly aware of what we do, how we do it, where we can improve, and how all of it affects our personal impact and corporate effectiveness.

The basketball great, Michael Jordan, has said, “I’ve missed more than **NINE THOUSAND** shots in my career. I’ve lost almost **THREE HUNDRED GAMES. TWENTY SIX** times I’ve been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I’ve failed over and over and over again in my life and that is why I **succeed**.” Every gesture... every exchange... every bit of input and outflow we contribute during the workday is fodder for our own experience. Some days we get the bear and on others, that darn bear gets us.... but if we’re smart, aware, and tenacious, every one of those incidents contributes to our own personal and professional data bank of priceless knowledge and experience. While some people have defined success as “getting up one more time than you fall,” each fail forms a brick that builds your foundation.... if you’re **SMART**.

I know of people that have mentored and guided me that have taught me some valuable lessons. I met a woman a long time ago.... she was in an unrelated field, but she remembered that when she was younger and starting out in her career, there was a pivotal point... an almost knee jerk reaction and she realized her mantra... “**Give me more**.” While she was in the virtual “bull pen” at her company, she knew that in order to distinguish herself... to add value to her own experience... to strengthen her own arsenal of skills and to greater utilize her talents, she had to know more, do more, and be trained more in order to inform each prong of her professional “tool kit.” She learned to say “**YES**” at an increasingly greater pace. She asked to be considered for training that would enhance her core skills. She offered to invest more time in learning new methods that allowed her expanded perspective. Through it all, she also saw that she was greater than her previously perceived limits, more able to expand to hold more knowledge and responsibility, and more willing to be accountable for the results she was producing. I realized that her experience... the way she built on what she had... her willingness to stretch and grow her own personal “data base,” was very similar to what I had experienced when I began at Quotient as a student. Opportunities are given... responsibility is **taken**... (**In one or two sentences, relate an early incident that for you illustrates this**) I remember when I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

As I said in the beginning of this talk, adaptability is key to **ANY** success. Business environments are constantly shifting.... management styles change accordingly.... what may have worked six months or a year ago doesn’t necessarily apply. We live in an age in which wars, whether virtual or real...are fought on Twitter, artificial intelligence is becoming more real by the minute, and people halfway around the world can work with us side by side in tandem. We rely on “the cloud,” wherever **IT** may be, and it **BETTER** work because we **ALL** have **A LOT** of stuff **UP THERE** (**Wait for the laugh**)... but it wasn’t so long ago that clouds were just a physical prediction of weather. A lot has changed. The generations that preceded us don’t necessarily “get it,” but observing that attitude provides a cautionary tale for **US**. Stay **ALERT**. Remain engaged. While we exist on what we perceive is the cutting edge of today’s technological offerings and procedures, that’s not good enough. There will **ALWAYS** be someone younger, smarter, more eager, and more willing to come up with **THE. NEXT. GREAT. IDEA**. Not **ONE PERSON** in this room... in this company... in this industry... can afford the arrogance to believe that isn’t possible. Life... and business are both cyclical. No one remains on top forever, but with a genuine interest and willingness to advance and evolve, longevity and sustained innovation/impact is possible.

Connect internally with your colleagues and coworkers. Partner with them. Offer your input when asked and your support when needed. Maintain a respectful environment and remember... it **ISN’T** all about you... it’s about the team, the advancement of knowledge and insight, and the support of the health, growth, and viability of the company.

Steve Jobs was quoted as saying, “For the past thirty three years, I have looked in the mirror every day and asked myself, ‘If today were the last day of my life, would I want to do what I am about to do today?’ And whenever the answer has been ‘no’ for too many days in a row, I know I need to change something.”

It’s also so important for us to be true to our purpose in life.... that’s not the same as being “happy.” It’s being authentic, respectful, and aware that what we do has consequences. It’s about being in touch with the impact we have in our lives, on the work we do, and how we relate to our environment. It’s important to know that each one of us has a lot to learn. No one knows everything.... in fact I have an acquaintance whose mantra is, “I don’t know what I don’t know.” It’s critical for each one of us to shed the pose of arrogance that comes from thinking we don’t need to learn. **WE DO**. Each one of us. It’s also essential to proceed in life with a positive, can do attitude... one that values curiosity, innovation, correction, second chances, and commitment to mutual success. The author, Anna Quindlen, has demonstrated no shortage of wisdom throughout her life and in her writing. She reminds us, “It’s so much easier to write a résumé than to craft a spirit.” She tells us, “The thing that is really hard and really amazing, is giving up on being perfect and beginning the work of becoming **YOURSELF**.” ... And of course... “A finished person is a boring person.” We are all works in progress, building our knowledge... collaborating... testing, challenging... moving the status quo. We each have limitless resources right in front of us and within us... we just have to employ that common sense and awareness to tap our **own** natural talents. Technology is great, but it doesn’t exist... yet... without human touch and contribution. Anna Quindlen also reminds us of a postcard she received from her father. It said, “Even if you win the rat race, you’re still a rat.” It’s also urgent that we create and maintain positive, respectful, encouraging environments within which to “conquer the world.” That makes everything so much more worthwhile.

Each one of us brings a unique perspective to everything we do. Each one of us is here for a reason. The more we do, the more we create, our capacity to understand, grow, and contribute increases geometrically. I am honored to be a part of this team and to continue to learn from, and work with, and **succeed** with all of you!! Thank you!!